

Business Case

B/R.6.101 Passenger Transport - Remove Discretionary Concessions and taxi vouchers

Project Overview

Project Title	B/R.6.101 Passenger Transport - Remove Discretionary Concessions and taxi vouchers		
Project Code	TR001308	Business Planning Reference	B/R.6.101
Business Planning Brief Description			
Senior Responsible Officer	Christine May/Paul Nelson		

Project Approach

Background

Why do we need to undertake this project?

Cambridgeshire County Council is currently spending £250,000 per year on non-statutory concessions to subsidise a range of travel schemes which were originally designed to make transport available to residents who might otherwise struggle to access affordable transport (see details below).

There are no referral pathways from adult social care or the learning disability service and clients' eligibility to access the scheme is based on the criteria for each scheme.

The proposal is to remove these discretionary concessions and subsidies in order to improve the council's ability to safeguard statutory services whilst ensuring that the authority is continuing to effectively meet our duties under the Care Act and the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme.

What would happen if we did not complete this project?

Budget pressure would need to be met from elsewhere within CCC and could impact negatively on statutory services

Approach

Aims / Objectives

Remove non-statutory transport subsidies and concessions to generate ongoing revenue savings and protect statutory services

Project Overview - What are we doing

There are four proposals within this area.

1. Community car schemes - remove up to 15p per mile subsidy (£120K)

There are a number of small community car schemes in operation across Cambridgeshire. Users of the service pay 30p per mile to the scheme organiser, and the council pays a subsidy to the operators of 15p per mile so that the volunteer driver receives 45p per mile in total. Withdrawal of the subsidy to the users of the scheme will mean that they will have to pay the full 45p to the scheme organiser/driver thereby increasing the cost to the customer.

2. Remove 50% concession on dial-a-ride services (£120K)

There are four dial-a-ride services in operation across Cambridgeshire. Users of the service join the scheme on a membership basis (free of charge) and then pay a fare for each journey. Concessionary bus pass holders are entitled to a 50% discount. The council is currently recompensing the dial-a-ride operators for the 50% concession and the subsequent lost revenue. There are approximately 1,000 users across the county making a total of 65,000 journeys. Withdrawal of the subsidy is likely to result in an increase in fare price to be passed on to the customers unless the operator chooses to cover the shortfall via other income streams or by reducing their operating costs.

3. Remove pre-9.30 am concession for blind and partially sighted customers (£10K)

Blind and partially sighted customers are already entitled to concessionary bus passes and can consequently travel for free after 9.30 a.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends and all day on Bank Holidays. For a number of years, this small client group has been granted an additional concession which allows them to travel for free before 9.30 a.m. on weekdays at a cost to the council of £10,000 per year. Withdrawal of this discretionary concession will not stop blind and partially sighted customers from travelling during peak time but require them to pay the full fare like all other passengers (disabled or non-disabled). Alternatively they could continue to travel free if they change their journey to commence after 09:30.

4. Cease the offering of taxi vouchers (£10K)

The Taxicard Scheme aims to provide assistance towards the cost of taxi journeys for people who have difficulties getting or using public transport. The scheme is intended to be for essential purposes, such as medical appointments or shopping and is restricted to those in the parishes of Fen Ditton, Horningsea, Histon, Impington, Teversham, Cambourne, Fulbourn, Girton, Grantchester, Oakington, Sawston, Babraham and Papworth Everard.

To access the scheme, new users have to apply to the County Council for an annual membership (free of charge) and then purchase booklets of taxi vouchers. Upon application, the customers have to confirm their eligibility by confirming that they:

receive a disability related benefit (must supply copy of benefit letter)

are registered blind or partially sighted (must supply copy of proof)

are aged between 16 and 60, have no access to public transport and do not have access to own means of transport (must supply proof of address)

are 60 years of age or over (must supply proof of age)

The clients are not required to provide evidence of being unable to afford a regular taxi fare.

Each voucher has a value of £2.50 but only costs the client £0.75. A booklet of 10 vouchers costs £7.50, whereas a booklet of 20 vouchers costs £15.

This way of subsidising taxi journeys in South Cambridgeshire costs the county council around £10,000 per year.

Although there is some overlap in parts of the county, most areas have dial-a-ride, community cars or taxicard schemes. The schemes provide different types of transport for different needs, with dial-a-ride services operating on a semi-scheduled basis and community cars covering a more flexible range of destinations.

What assumptions have you made?

That user numbers and claims submitted stay on the current level. Projected savings are based on 17/18 spend and maximum savings potential.

What constraints does the project face?

The schemes are popular with users as they provide convenient transport and saves them money in comparison to paying a regular taxi fare. It is also popular with operators as it provides subsidised income rather than them recouping the full cost from users. Removing the subsidies is consequently likely to be met with considerable resistance.

Delivery Options

Has an options and feasibility study been undertaken?

Community car schemes - three main options. Reduce subsidy by 5p per mile, 10p per mile or full 15p per mile. Savings are £40k, £80k or £120k and if subsidy only reduced by 5p per mile or 10p per mile then some form of reduced subsidy will remain.

Concessionary fares on community transport - Reduce concession to 25% rather than remove full 50% concession. Savings reduced to £60k instead of £120k.

Pre-09:30 am travel subsidy for blind and partially sighted - There are seven categories of disability under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, but only one category (blind and partially sighted) are currently agreed locally to be able to travel before 09:30. The scheme could be equalised by extending the concession to the other six groups, but there would be a considerable cost to this rather than a saving. There is no evidence to suggest that there is an unmet need within these client groups for subsidised travel before 9:30 am.

Option for all of the above to retain as current schemes. Choosing this option will result in the County Council having to identify up to £250,000 savings from other budgets.

Alternative options have been explored previously such as total transport, opening up school transport and a County Council owned fleet, but none of these options are achievable without additional investment and will not achieve the savings required.

Scope / Interdependencies

Scope

What is within scope?

Discretionary elements of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (subsidies and concessions)

What is outside of scope?

Statutory elements of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme

Project Dependencies

Title

Cost and Savings

See accompanying financial report

Non Financial Benefits

Non Financial Benefits Summary

None

Title

Released capacity

Risks

Title

Community Transport Schemes become financially unviable

The savings are not achieved due to unpopularity of proposal

Costs for other County Council and partner agencies increase

Project Impact

Community Impact Assessment

Who will be affected by this proposal?

Users of the services, operators of community transport schemes.

What positive impacts are anticipated from this proposal?

Saving to County Council budget
Reduced Council administration

What negative impacts are anticipated from this proposal?

Operators of community transport schemes may choose to pass on the cost to customers resulting in an increase in fares.

Operators of community transport schemes may decide that the scheme is financially unviable and cease operations which, in turn, will reduce existing customers' transport choices

The cost to other County Council and related services, such as health, may increase due to increased rural isolation and reduced mobility.

Are there other impacts which are more neutral?

Disproportionate impacts on specific groups with protected characteristics

Details of Disproportionate Impacts on protected characteristics and how these will be addressed

The users of the existing transport schemes are typically senior citizens and/or have a disability and are living in a rural part of the county. However, there is no evidence to suggest that an increase in fares will render the service unaffordable to these users (eligibility criteria do not include financial situation and isn't means tested), although the cost will increase. The increase to the customer will vary, e.g. from 30p to 45p per mile for community car scheme users, and from free to £4 or £4 to £8 for a return journey depending on location for dial-a-ride users. Taxicard users will see their journey cost increase by £1.75 per journey and blind/partially sighted users will need to pay the full bus fare (should they travel before 9.30am) which could be up to £4 per journey.

The County Council will continue to assess social care needs in line with the authority's Transport Allocation Policy (2015) to ensure accordance with the Care Act 2015, section 29.

Business Case

B/R.6.103 Historic Environment

Project Overview

Project Title	B/R.6.103 Historic Environment		
Project Code	TR001313	Business Planning Reference	B/R.6.103
Business Planning Brief Description	For Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to provide archaeological services for Peterborough City Council (PCC), absorbing PCC's resources into the CCC team.		
Senior Responsible Officer	Sass Pledger / Quinton Carroll		

Project Approach

Background

Why do we need to undertake this project?

Archaeological services are required for both planning purposes, as required in the National Planning Policy Framework 2018, and also for community purposes as heritage and culture are significant economic and social drivers. However, it can be uneconomic and impractical for smaller authorities to maintain the full range of archaeological functions given the specialist nature of the work and the range of staff skills required to deliver it. The CCC Historic Environment Team (HET) has 9.2 Full Time Employees; PCC has one permanent post.

This project provides advantages for both parties. For CCC it generates an income stream plus additional staff resources in the north of the county, allowing for more efficient use of time. PCC will gain access to a far greater pool of resources, providing expertise and capacity, plus a more efficient provision of their Historic Environment Record (HER), both made available through economies of scale. It would also reduce their annual spend by a third.

What would happen if we did not complete this project?

The two authorities would continue to maintain separate service functions, and lose the advantages created by a joint solution which advantages both parties.

Approach

Aims / Objectives

Aims for CCC

To make this work financially we would request an annual lump sum from PCC, currently estimated to be £20,000, and introduce our charging schedule to provide the additional income necessary. At this stage we can only estimate the amount of income we could generate from archaeological casework and also from PCCs HER, but it would be reasonable to agree payment at one level then monitor the ongoing transactions. We can also introduce other chargeable services currently not undertaken by PCC, such as responding to Environmental Stewardship applications, a task that generates over £20k per year for CCC but currently PCC does not undertake.

Aims for PCC:

- More return for their investment – a combined team would have 9 staff with different areas of expertise. Joining with CCC will buy them access to that expertise rather than the one they currently have.
- Proactive – we can see where the gaps in their evidence base are for strategic planning purposes and seek grants to fill them.
- Resilience and sustainability – low numbers of staff means fluctuating levels of support for planning advice and HER

access e.g. holidays and illness. The proposed approach allows for cover in these times. There will always be someone at the end of the line to get the job done.

- Reduced budget – if PCC choose to endorse the charging model used by CCC Historic Environment Team then it could reduce PCCs cash contributions.
- Quality – PCC’s HER needs upgrading and improving; absorption into ours would expedite this process, plus reduce ICT overhead and raise its profile, whilst remaining detachable if needs be. It also provides capacity for environmental stewardship and for data enhancement projects to be bid for.
- Storage – merging PCC and CCC HET would bring CCC’s Archaeological Archive storage processes to the table; whilst Peterborough Museum is a receiving body, nevertheless having access to our facility could work well with Vivacity and the Museum’s forward planning by offering an opportunity to alleviate pressure.

Project Overview - What are we doing

We would provide a full service of HER and planning support to PCC. We would agree service standards similar to those we already have with the Cambridgeshire District Councils. PCC staff member stays as the main contact for the area, remains mainly a home worker but would now be one of 4.1 FTE Development Management Officers rather than by herself. This means extra CCC staff would be available to cover and share the load/provide cover, and PCC staff member could support north Cambs if needs be.

Additionally, we would take over PCC HER and deliver it via remote hosting alongside our own database, which is Exegesis HBSMR. We believe that once PCC data is integrated with CCCs into a single dataset we could operate PCCs updating and query functions fairly efficiently, in return for an annual fee and software licencing costs. PCC's current HER dataset will need a one-off investment to address shortcomings and get it to the point where it can be used efficiently. The scale of this will need some more assessment at our end, but this requirement for PCC would be fairly similar regardless of whether we absorbed their data into ours or created/acquired a new software package like Exegesis HBSMR.

What assumptions have you made?

- That there is enough work within PCC area to provide an income stream. We already generate income within Cambridgeshire in this way so are familiar with the 'market'.
- That PCC would support this level of charging for their services. Discussions with service managers indicate so, but evidently this could be a political decision.

What constraints does the project face?

The level of upgrade required to PCC resources to bring them up to CCC levels may be more than anticipated.

At present PCC's current archaeology officer has to (we are told) be formally advised of this project. This is a current constraint because in order to fully understand any data and process issues within PCC existing function, we need access to information that is best known by her.

Delivery Options

Has an options and feasibility study been undertaken?

Division of service functions with PCC; no transfer of employment of PCC officer

Scope / Interdependencies

Scope

What is within scope?

What is outside of scope?

Project Dependencies

Title

Cost and Savings

See accompanying financial report

Non Financial Benefits Non Financial Benefits Summary For Peterborough a better and more resilient service
Non Financial Benefits

Non Financial Benefits Summary

For Peterborough a better and more resilient service provision for their users.

For Cambridgeshire a broader service base for resilience.

Title

Risks

Title

Project Impact

Community Impact Assessment

Who will be affected by this proposal?

Users of archaeology services in PCC (public, education and development)

What positive impacts are anticipated from this proposal?

A better and more resilient service

What negative impacts are anticipated from this proposal?

Very little apart from a possible perception of loss of 'locality' within PCC area

Are there other impacts which are more neutral?

Disproportionate impacts on specific groups with protected characteristics

Details of Disproportionate Impacts on protected characteristics and how these will be addressed

Business Case

B/R.6.105 Transformation of the Infrastructure & Growth Service into a profit centre

Project Overview

Project Title	B/R.6.105 Transformation of the Infrastructure & Growth Service into a profit centre		
Project Code	TR001392	Business Planning Reference	B/R.6.105
Business Planning Brief Description	Remove the revenue budget and expand the commercial activities delivered by the service to maximise income opportunities for the service through recharge and development-related income.		
Senior Responsible Officer	Andrew Preston, Assistant Director of Infrastructure and Growth		

Project Approach

Background

Why do we need to undertake this project?

To maximise income for the Council and create the potential for areas that cannot be recharged to capital to be supplemented by the areas that can through income from external organisations and enable a more commercial approach to the management of risk to the authority and overall cost of providing services.

What would happen if we did not complete this project?

Development related planning activities that aren't rechargeable would continue to create revenue pressures for the Council. Capital and revenue savings through efficient and effective commercial resource management and allocation would not be realised.

Approach

Aims / Objectives

- Adopt a more commercial approach to the operation and management of the service
- Appoint a partner to provide strategic support and expertise to support the operation of the service
- Achieve revenue and capital savings through more effective use of resources and
- Maximise income generation opportunities
- Provide financial support for non-rechargeable services

Project Overview - What are we doing

Summary

Commercial operation of the service will maximise income opportunities and standardise the approach to working with external clients, enabling consideration of the associated commercial risks.

Current practice

The service predominantly recovers its operating costs through recharge and some development related income. A large proportion of this is for external clients, such as the Combined Authority & Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP).

Future model

- Standardised approach to working with external clients offering the following services:

- Delivery of major infrastructure projects
- Transport planning and strategy services
- Growth and Development related services
- Expanding operations within Cambridgeshire and offering services to other local authorities. This would entail expanding the team to take on additional projects.
- Joint delivery with a strategic partner that would supply personnel with expertise to deliver additional services / or hiring an external consultant to supply expertise and provide training to upskill members of the team
- The new model would require a change in the way that the service operates including effective systems for time management.
- Revenue generated from this approach will support those services such as strategy and development related planning activities that aren't rechargeable or covered by a specific revenue or capital budget.
- The service will incorporate risk within its approach, adopting a private sector approach to resource and budget management.

Delivery

Aug 2018 – Mar 2019:

Key milestones:

- Service restructure in view of the upcoming changes look to bring together posts within Peterborough and Cambridgeshire
- Development of Shared Services arrangement with Peterborough
- Further scoping work to develop the project
- £79k reduction in the Transport Strategy & Funding Revenue budget. Develop marketing and business development strategy
- Draft an options appraisal setting out the options and a recommendation for the style of partnership the service will seek to set up with an external consultant (Partnership agreement / JV etc.)

Apr 2019 – Mar 2020:

Key milestones:

- Present options to C&I Committee for decision
- Carry out procurement exercise to appoint either a) a strategic partner or b) external consultant

What assumptions have you made?

- It would be possible to gain sufficient revenue to recover the costs of non-rechargeable activity savings currently offered.
- The workload for external organisations will continue to be in line with current trends and therefore existing income streams will stay the same/ yield increased returns

What constraints does the project face?

- Team capacity to expand operations with a commercial focus
Mitigation: Joint delivery with Peterborough and operational partner
- The service do not currently have the expertise to operate in this way
Mitigation: Specifying expertise required within tender specification for a partner or restructure considers business development role
- The service do not currently have the right systems in place for full commercial operation (e.g. time management system)
Mitigation: Reviewing in-house products and procuring systems as necessary

Delivery Options

Has an options and feasibility study been undertaken?

Scope / Interdependencies

Scope

What is within scope?

- Developing a commercial trading operation within the LA
- Expanding customer base
- Investigating options for appointing a partner

What is outside of scope?

- Becoming a Local Authority Company Traded Organisation (LACTO)

Project Dependencies

Title

Cost and Savings

See accompanying financial report

Non Financial Benefits

Non Financial Benefits Summary

- Optimising the skills quotient within the service
- Positive outcomes through improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of the service

Title

Risks

Title

Project Impact

Community Impact Assessment

Who will be affected by this proposal?

- Staff within Growth and Regeneration
- Current delivery partners
- Current and future developers operating in the region

What positive impacts are anticipated from this proposal?

- Better customer journey for developers as they can work with the service end to end
- Facilitating the delivery of new major capital infrastructure projects

What negative impacts are anticipated from this proposal?

Impact on competition within the market

Are there other impacts which are more neutral?

N/A

Disproportionate impacts on specific groups with protected characteristics

Details of Disproportionate Impacts on protected characteristics and how these will be addressed

N/A

